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"There is a *bright spot* of rather irregular shape (rather *pear-shaped*, with the smaller end towards the nucleus) on the western side of the nucleus; and a streak of light extending almost directly sunward from the smaller arch to the edge of the larger arch. The middle radius of the exterior sector makes an angle of about 188° with the direction of the dark channel as deduced from my sketch of its appearance.

"Oct. 11. The *interior sector* has greatly increased since the 8th. It is much *mottled*, the luminosity in different parts being far from uniform. To the south-west of the nucleus it has a very *dark* spot, rather pear-shaped, the smaller end being toward the centre; and also a *bright* spot nearly to the west of the nucleus, and only a few seconds from it, looking rather like a second, smaller, and fainter nucleus. There is also a bright irregular streak, extending sunward from the nucleus to the arc of the inner sector. The middle radius of the sector is now inclined to the axis of the tail (reckoned round the *east* side as before) at an angle of about 205°, as deduced from my sketch.

"Oct. 17, $6^h\ 18^m$. The comet is dim and hazy, but a marked peculiarity was immediately observed in the head. The nucleus is *very eccentric* (towards the *orbital* preceding side) with respect to the inner arch; and also, though not so strikingly, with respect to the out erarch. The inner arch is much smaller than that seen on the 11th. Scarcely any tail is visible in the strong twilight and so near the horizon. A bank of clouds soon covered that part of the sky, and the weather did not subsequently permit the comet to be seen at all.

"*Haddenham, Thame,*
"*January*, 1859."

Note on Saturn and his Rings, with a Sketch of the Planet.
By Capt. Noble.

The accompanying sketch* is intended to indicate a feature in the detail of the planet *Saturn*, which is not delineated in any of the engravings to which I have access, and of which I can find no mention in any of the published accounts of Saturnian topography in my possession. I allude to the curvature of the shadow of the ring (or rings), on the ball of the planet. In Captain Jacob's admirable and most truthful drawing, this shadow, which, it seems to me, *should* (at the epoch of its execution) have exhibited this curvature, is represented as bounded by an edge strictly parallel to that of the exterior edge of ring A; whereas, on the night on which my sketch was made (and I have had one corroborative glimpse since), the curvature was so marked as at once to strike the eye on its

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* This drawing was exhibited at the Meeting.

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application to the telescope, bending downwards most noticeably towards the preceding limb of the planet. The nebulous ring was wonderfully bright, in fact (especially in the preceding ansa) was of a brilliant slate colour; and, despite the bright moonlight, five satellites were steadily seen. I may say that my drawing represents with great accuracy the appearance which the ring C presented, and always does present to me, viz. that of dipping under ring B; as I never could yet satisfactorily trace the junction of those portions of it in the ansæ with the part crossing the ball. The division in the outer ring was not seen. This may seem an unnecessary addition when the aperture of my telescope (4·2 inches) is considered; but I have on two occasions this year (Wednesday, Jan. 13th, and Thursday, Jan. 14th) glimpsed this division very fairly for some seconds together. I could not, either, see the peculiar streaking on the 19th ult. on the southern part of the ball of *Saturn*, which was visible early in 1858; nothing but the one great rust-coloured equatoreal belt being visible. The powers employed were 255 and 394: the latter only for confirmation of detail, the drawing having been made with the former.

Observatory, Forest Lodge, Maresfield,
December 9, 1858.

Extract of a Letter from Professor Wolfers, of Berlin, to Mr. Johnson.

"Allow me to call your attention to an interesting phenomenon in the heavens which will take place on the 20th of July next, viz., the near approach to each other of the planets *Venus* and *Jupiter*. I believe I am the only astronomer who has noticed this rare approaching phenomenon. The approximate elements which I have computed are to be found in the *Astronomische Jahrbuch* for 1859, and in the *Astronomische Nachrichten*, No. 1161. I hope both these works are accessible to you. Greenwich is better situated with respect to this phenomenon than Berlin. The time of the nearest approach of the planets is 1859, July 20, $15^h\ 44^m$, mean Greenwich time; it will, therefore, take place before sunrise. You will oblige me by directing the attention of the Royal Astronomical Society to this phenomenon."

A letter has been received by the Astronomer Royal from Mr. Maclear, dated Royal Observatory, Cape of Good Hope, 1858, December 15, giving a good account of his observations

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